



Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

Nearly one-third of American women (31%) report being physically or sexually abused by an intimate partner in their lifetime. The California Battered Women's Shelter Program (BWSP) funds direct shelter services for abused women and their children and community prevention activities.

BWSP utilized the California Women's Health Survey (CWHS) to identify domestic violence (DV)-related help-seeking behaviors. Analyses were limited to the 3,878 CWHS respondents who were willing to discuss couple relationships. Of those, 207 or 6% of California women reported that in the previous 12 months their intimate partners either: threw objects at them, hit, kicked, pushed, slapped, choked, beat up, forced them to have sex, or threatened/used a gun or a knife on them. A majority of victims and non-victims alike (68.7%) stated that they had knowledge about DV programs in their communities; however, only 16.9% of all the victims stated that they sought help or medical care for intimate partner violence in the past 12 months. Those seeking help reported using between one and four community resources.

Listed below are characteristics of victims who did or did not seek help:

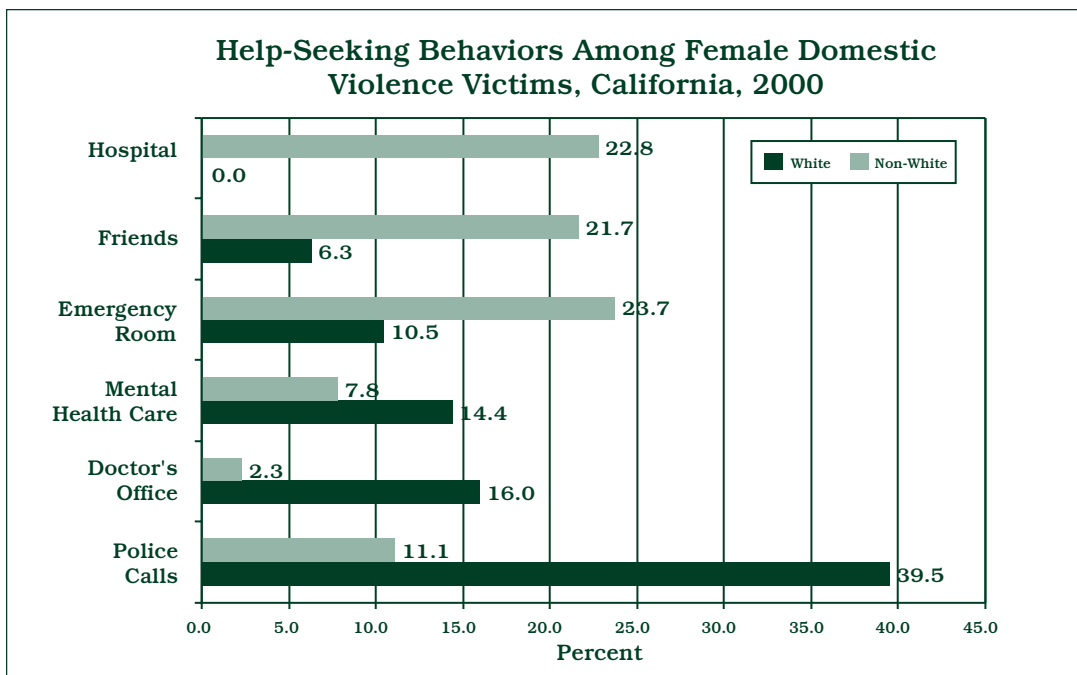
- About 19.8% of the U.S. born victims sought help for DV, compared with 7.1% of the non-U.S. born victims.
- About 20.4% of the White victims, compared with 11.7% of the non-White victims sought help for DV. None of the "Asian/Pacific Islander/Other" victims stated that they sought help (n=14).
- Only 21.4% of the victims who had knowledge of community DV programs reported that they sought help.
- About 28.8% of the victims neither sought help nor had knowledge about DV programs in their communities.

Among victims who sought help, 30.7% went to the police/sheriff, 14.6% visited the emergency room, and 12.3% sought mental health care. The type of DV assistance resources used varied by race/ethnicity (see table).

HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIORS AMONG CALIFORNIA WOMEN WHO ARE VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, 2000

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Public Health Message: Most female domestic violence (DV) victims and their children, especially those who are not White and not born in the United States, do not receive assistance to address the abuse they are experiencing. To increase the safety of these victims and provide direct services, cultural, language, and gender appropriate outreach and education activities should be available through a variety of resources and community outlets. Enforcement, health, and social services-related agencies can be appropriate resources in reaching and helping DV victims.



Issue 3, Summer 2002, Num. 5